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the men. Roggeveen, however, states that only two or three old women were seen. 175 609

From scant information given in Roggeveen's log (186) it is apparent that the ships anchored on the north coast, probably at La Pérouse. Fearing for the security of his vessels when a northerly wind blew up and convinced that Easter Island was not the land of Davis, Roggeveen made no attempt at a more thorough exploration of the island and sailed forth on the tenth of April.

The experiences of all later visitors in their dealings with natives were very much the same as that of Roggeveen at this first contact. Despite the nearly complete change of their culture, the natives of today react no differently to the arrival of a foreign ship. They evince the same curiosity, they are gripped by the same excitement, and the same noisy crowd awaits the landing boats. The women are no less generous with their persons, and the men no less prone to petty thievery if opportunity comes their way. 175 609 [181]

The main sources for the events which accompanied the discovery of Easter Island are Roggeveen's log book (186) and the narrative of Carl Friederich Behrens (18). Roggeveen's account is precise and accurate in details; Behrens' famous description of Easter Island is one of the most fanciful and misleading documents we have. 175 114

In a new effort to reach the land of Davis, a Spanish expedition, under the command of Felipe Gonzalez y Haedo, rediscovered Easter Island in 1770. The two Spanish ships were anchored outside the cove of La Pérouse (Hanga-o-honu), but disembarkation was made on the beach of Ovahe. In order to chart the island which Gonzalez believed he was the first to discover, a boat was sent around the island which returned the following day after having stopped for the night near Vinapu on the south coast. A party was then landed to reconnoiter the interior and distract the natives, while another group ascended the slope of Poike with three crosses to be planted on the tops of the three parasitic cones on the side of Puakatiki, thus solemnly taking possession of the island in the name of Spain. Natives, invited to sign the act of possession, made marks on the lower part of the document and by so doing became Spanish subjects. Relations with the natives were cordial. The crews had been given strict orders not to molest them, and exchanges went on quite satisfactorily, although the Spaniards noticed the thievery of the natives and were bothered by their begging. The women invited the visitors to have sexual intercourse with them, and the island men were often the intermediaries in these affairs. The Spaniards seem to have disembarked infrequently, and the exploration of the interior of the island was neglected. The Spanish ships left after six days. 175 [648] [609] [837]

Captain Cook visited Easter Island during his second voyage to the South Seas (1772-1775). He stopped for three days in the bay of Hanga-roa, now

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caves, where they lived in great discomfort and constant anxiety, neglecting the cultivation of their fields. 175 648

At the request of Mgr. Jaussen, representation was made to the Peruvian government by the French minister in Lima. The British government backed France in demanding justice for the enslaved islanders. Orders were given to assemble the blackbirds at Callao so that they might be sent back to their homes. Tuberculosis, smallpox, and the change of living conditions and climate, together with unsuitable food and the hardships of guano digging on the barren islands off the Peruvian coast had killed about 900 natives in less than one year. Before the surviving 100 could be put on board ship, many of them contracted smallpox and 85 died before the end of the journey. Only 15 were landed on the island, and they carried with them the infection of smallpox, which in a very short time decimated the rest of the population. The casualties caused by the epidemic are said to have been in the thousands (64, pp. 256-257). Zumbohm (230, vol. 5, p. 662) adds: "The inexperience of the natives, the lack of remedies, their imprudent practices, all increased the number of victims to such an extent that they were unable to bury them." 175 648 731

During these few years the native culture crumbled; the old racial order was destroyed, the population reduced to one third or one quarter of its size, and the transmission of the religious and moral traditions was suddenly interrupted. Internecine wars completed the island's ruin. Zumbohm (230, vol. 5, p. 662) writes: 175 178

> The former inhabitants of the island had left rather good plantations. Those who remained had an easy living and indulged in their natural laziness, not caring to insure their future by working. But when they came to the time to share the products of the fields, quarrels arose which rapidly degenerated into dangerous wars. These fights brought waste and plundering and consequently starvation. That is why the population decreased so rapidly. 175 178 181

Ollivier (165, vol. 39, p. 257) alludes to this period of anarchy and misery in the following terms:

> The mortality caused by misery and famine is increasing rapidly. The plantations have been plundered and they give scarcely any sweet potatoes, which these unhappy people eat half raw. It must be added that laziness and carelessness make their situation even worse. It is necessary for some brother with the energy of Brother Eyraud to start new plantations in the lands near the sea in order that help may be given to this starving people. It would be possible then to take care of all the children, made orphans by the death of their parents or by abandonment, who lead vagrant lives.

At this time, not before, there developed the gap between present and past which makes so difficult the understanding of many aspects of the Easter Island culture. The missionaries were struck by the native's lack of interest in their traditions and lack of knowledge of their history. They were surprised also to notice how little was left of the old religion and of the ancient social organization. 175 178

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JOINT PROPERTY

592 423 241 Roussel (190, p. 428) says that the fields were planted and the crops harvested in common by the members of a household or by the people living at the same place [lineage]. The workers were rewarded with a feast (*hatu*), the size of which depended upon the extent of the land and the importance of the owner. The dimensions given by early voyagers for the dwelling houses suggest that several biological families, probably closely related, lived together.

235 422 436 Near the foundations of ancient houses are generally found chicken houses of stone in which the fowls were kept during the night. It is impossible to determine now what system of property was applied as regards poultry. Hens undoubtedly had a great value and were used for exchange. Today fowls are personal property and every man identifies his hens by an ownership mark cut on the legs. I was unable to discover whether ownership marks were used in ancient times or adopted under Chilian influence.

431 476 602 Today everyone gives freely of his clothes and of cooking and tilling implements. Between relatives there is a constant exchange of gifts conforming to patterns of reciprocity. Children are permitted to use anything they need from the houses of either their paternal or maternal relatives. During his first stay on the island, Eyraud was obliged by the natives to build a boat. They gathered wood from all over the island and everyone participated in the construction of the truly "national boat."

226 422 501 The few boats on Easter Island are joint property of all those who have contributed to their building, either in work or in furnishing wood. One such boat belongs to seven men, and each must give his permission before the boat can be used. The joint owners of a boat fish together and divide their catch among their own families. If the canoe belongs to a single person, those who help him fish receive the least desirable fish, and the owner keeps the tuna fish.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

THIEVERY

674 577 The thievery of Easter Islanders has been stressed by all visitors and their dishonesty has become as famous as their statues. Even when the Europeans avenged the small thefts by slaughtering the unarmed natives, the islanders continued to steal. They used the charms of their women to distract the seamen while they robbed them of their hats or handkerchiefs.

181 674 577 The thievery of the natives is not merely the result of uncontrolled desire for many new and astonishing things. Their dishonesty appears innate and systematic; they enjoy stealing the fruits they have given to their visitors as much as the theft of cloth or European articles. Their bartering with the white men is absolutely unscrupulous; they filled with stones the baskets

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they presented to Captain Cook (83, vol. 1, p. 579), laying a few potatoes on top. The larcenies were committed so openly and so generally that they seem to have been considered perfectly natural, although by running away the natives showed that they felt they might be punished if they were caught in the act of pilfering.

While anchored off Easter Island, Du Petit-Thouars (65, vol. 2, p. 228) received some natives on board his ship:

> The crew were busy taking off their underwear when one of the savages proved himself to be a very clever thief. He sat, as if he did not notice it, upon a red necktie which he hid very adroitly in a little basket he had with him. When obliged to give back the tie he manifested neither anger nor surprise. He tried his trick again with the hope of being more successful next time.

Geiseler (87, p. 29) says that the natives "deem it a sign of cleverness" to plunder Europeans. "We observed during our stay at Vaihu that they attempted, in every way, to recover the eggs they had already sold to us and to sell them a second time. They would burst into laughter when we noticed the theft."

When Eyraud went to the island for the first time, he was robbed of his clothing and left almost naked. Once, as he worked in a well, he was threatened with death if he did not hand over immediately the trousers he had on. Ollivier (165, p. 254) writes in a letter to his superior that "the instinct of destruction together with that of stealing appear to me as the dominant features of their character."

The islanders of today have changed very little. In trade they perpetrate the most remarkable tricks to deceive the foreigners. After the visit of the *Baquedano* in 1934, one of them boasted that he had sold a bag full of stones as antiques. For years they have robbed the Williamson-Balfour Company of cattle and sheep; in 1934 they stole more than 3,000 sheep. Their raids are not justified by necessity; the Company sells them sheep at 20 cents a head, an amount they can easily afford to pay. The company store is constantly threatened by possible plundering. Despite the police organized by company managers, it is seldom that thieves are caught in the very act of stealing. Although all know who the culprits are, no one would dare to tell their names. In Easter Island, as in Tahiti, it was probably considered smart to steal if the larceny remained undiscovered.

Thomson (215, p. 465) correctly says that the natives saw no moral delinquency in the practice of thieving. More doubtful is his statement, based on information from Salmon, that "they had a god of thieving, and successful operations were believed to be accomplished under his patronage, and only detected when not sanctioned by that spirit."

The treatment of visitors differed not at all from the methods the natives would have used among themselves had such abuse been tolerated without retaliation. Gonzalez (90, p. 98) remarks:

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181 577 674 . . . they are so fond of taking other people's property that what one man obtains another will take from him, and he yields it without feeling aggrieved; the most he will do is to resist a little, then he loosens his hold of it and they remain friends. It appears as if among themselves their gods are held in common, and I believe they conceal as much as they can get possession of below the ground, for we never saw afterwards any of the things we gave them.

Legends often mention episodes in which persons who took things from others ran away to escape punishment. Modern natives steal among themselves as much as they pilfer foreigners. If they are detected they make no effort to keep the stolen goods, but quietly return it. They prefer to steal food which may be used without attracting undue attention, and they alter stolen clothes so that the legitimate owner cannot recognize them.

PUNISHMENT OF THEFT

685 The breaking down of the old order and the deposition of the old chiefs brought about, as a natural consequence, the destruction of ancient rules of justice. No tradition has been preserved as to the maintenance of justice in ancient times. Missionaries are silent on this subject, and the later voyagers had little opportunity to inquire into the functioning of the old institutions. Thomson (215, p. 473) tried to obtain details concerning laws but had to be content with vague and contradictory statements.

Zumbohm (230, vol. 6, p. 131) says in regard to punishment for theft:

685 691 As for their fellow countrymen, it was very different, it is true that they robbed one another as much as they could, but secretly. But woe to the thief caught in the very act by a victim stronger than himself. He might expect a terrible vengeance. Here is an instance of the barbarious deeds which might happen in such occasions. Before our arrival a young boy had stolen a chicken from the chief of Hotu-iti. The chief took the poor child by the foot with one hand and with the other he seized his thigh and then putting the leg on his knee he broke it as if it was a piece of wood.

Geiseler (87, p. 28) remarks that, inasmuch as there was no authority vested in the chiefs, the victim of a theft had to mete out justice himself:

This happens in most of the cases in such a way that the robbed person as soon as he discovers the right thief takes back what has been stolen or something else as compensation, asking for satisfaction amid loud shoutings. Very seldom do they resort to beatings or fights for this motive. A chief would in that way make justice for himself if somebody steals from him. They can never punish others for this crime.

Thomson (215, p. 465) probably on the authority of Salmon, writes:

Thieves caught in the act might be beaten, knocked about, and the aggressor was permitted to offer no resistance in the efforts to escape, although he might be the largest and the most powerful. Before the retaliation could be enforced, the theft had to be proven and fixed beyond question, then the plundered individual here was at liberty to recover the value of the loss from any property available belonging to the robber, and in the event of the value not being recovered, articles of value could be destroyed to equalize the amount. Retaliation for theft could be enforced by the weak and feeble against the strong and powerful, and any resistance would call to their aid the entire community.

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could not decide whether these men were a heterogeneous crowd of European beachcombers or real Polynesians, the sons of the sea rovers who had colonized the island. That European blood flowed in their veins, there was no doubt. Some of the men who came aboard and tried to sell their curios looked decidedly French; others might almost have had brothers or cousins in Hamburg or in London. Yet there was something exotic in all of them and traces of old Polynesian descent could be seen in their black, wavy hair, in the strange, vivacious dark eyes, in the high foreheads. These first Easter Islanders whom I met impressed me as of mixed race. Later, genealogical investigations showed that only a third of the present inhabitants could claim descent from a pure Polynesian ancestry—and the claims were not always well attested.

There is one misconception about these people which should be dispelled. It has been stated over and over again that the modern Easter Islanders are a degenerate population and that they can have nothing in common with the people who carved the statues and inscribed the tablets. This is not true. They appeared to me in many ways to be highly gifted.

During the 6 months I spent on the island, I found myself compelled to admire their ingenuity and their remarkable talent for assimilation. No European village has given me the impression of more intelligent adaptation to a changing world. This capacity is doubtless responsible, in part, for the passing of the old culture. Though the most isolated people in the world, the Easter Islanders are constantly on the lookout for new ideas, new fashions—and also new vices. Their extraordinary faculty for exploiting any weakness or interest in their visitors has had some amusing results. For example, a few years after the missionaries came to the island, the natives started to speculate on the antiquities and on the mysterious past of their little country. Finding that foreigners were interested in the small wooden images of emaciated figures which had been one of their forefathers' greatest artistic achievements, they proceeded to produce crude imitations by the hundreds. The modern craftsmen are without illusion as to the perfection of their work, but they excuse themselves by saying: "Why should we bother about beauty and finish when our patrons don't discriminate between good and bad images and we get in exchange the soap and clothes we want?" Thanks to this commercial instinct, several of their old industries have been kept alive.

One of their greatest and most profitable activities is palming off on amateur archeologists rough stones alleged to be ancient artifacts or well-made imitations of them. The very day of my landing a native cynically proposed to cooperate with me in faking old imple-

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